Vernon

Hospital Budget Cut by $767,000

VERNON — The state Commission on Hospitals and Health Care has cut Rockville General Hospital's requested $11.5 million operating budget for next year by $767,000 during the preliminary review phase of the annual state review of budgets from 35 private hospitals around the state.

A Rockville General spokesman said Friday that hospital officials will meet with commission staff early in August to discuss the budget reduction and try to convince the state to restore all or part of the funding.

The state commission will hold a formal hearing on Rockville General's budget Aug. 23. After that hearing, the state will establish an official budget figure for the hospital, the Rockville General spokesman said.

Rockville General's requested budget for the fiscal year that starts Oct. 1, would have equaled a 9.7 percent increase over the current year's budget and would have boosted the rate for a semi-private hospital room from $120 a day to $128 a day, the spokesman said.

The requested budget also would have allowed the hospital to start a new intravenous therapy service which would have required three or four more nursing positions, the spokesman said. The new service would have provided a team of trained nurses to give intravenous medication instead of having any nurse handle that sometimes difficult and painful procedure, the spokesman said.

Hospital officials said the $11.5 million request "is a realistic view of projected hospital costs and is accurate and reasonable," the spokesman said. Hopsital Administrator Robert Boardman and other officials probably will attend the commission meetings to present hospital arguments for the full budget, the spokesman said.

The state commission has approved six hospitals' budget requests for 1980-81 and is expected to approve two more next week. Hearings on the remaining 27 hospital budgets will continue through the summer. The state commission, which is charged with keeping medical costs down, said earlier that it probably would reject any budget increases over 9.1 percent. The 9.1 percent ceiling was based on the current rate of inflation.

Rockville General was among hospitals that challenged the state commission's budgetary authority in the 1976-77 fiscal year. The state last year approved a $9.9 million operating budget for the hospital.

The state commission this week approved a $10,000 capital expense item for 1980-81 to expand the hosptial's regional kidney dialysis service from six to eight machines.

The capital budget is separate from the requested operating budget.

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